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Security Council

Seventy-third year

Provisional

8398th meeting

Wednesday, 14 November 2018, 10 a.m.

New York

President:	Mr. Ma Zhaoxu	(China)
Members:	Bolivia (Plurinational State of)	Mr. Llorentty Solíz
	Côte d'Ivoire	Mr. Ipo
	Equatorial Guinea	Mr. Esono Mbengono
	Ethiopia	Mr. Amde
	France	Mr. Michon
	Kazakhstan	Mr. Umarov
	Kuwait	Mr. Alotaibi
	Netherlands	Mr. Van Oosterom
	Peru	Mr. Meza-Cuadra
	Poland	Ms. Wronecka
	Russian Federation	Mr. Nebenzia
	Sweden	Mr. Skoog
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Ms. Pierce
	United States of America	Mr. Cohen

Agenda

The situation in Somalia

Letter dated 7 November 2018 from the Chair of the Security Council Committee pursuant to resolutions 751 (1992) and 1907 (2009) concerning Somalia and Eritrea addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2018/1002)

Letter dated 7 November 2018 from the Chair of the Security Council Committee pursuant to resolutions 751 (1992) and 1907 (2009) concerning Somalia and Eritrea addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2018/1003)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in Somalia

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The President (*spoke in Chinese*): In accordance with rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representatives of Djibouti, Eritrea and Somalia to participate in this meeting.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

Members of the Council have before them document S/2018/1010, which contains the text of a draft resolution submitted by the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

I wish to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2018/1002, which contains a letter dated 7 November 2018 from the Chair of the Security Council Committee pursuant to resolutions 751 (1992) and 1907 (2009) concerning Somalia and Eritrea addressed to the President of the Security Council. I wish to also draw the attention of Council members to document S/2018/1003, which contains a letter dated 7 November 2018 from the Chair of the Security Council Committee pursuant to resolutions 751 (1992) and 1907 (2009) concerning Somalia and Eritrea addressed to the President of the Security Council.

The Council is ready to proceed to the vote on the draft resolution before it. I shall put the draft resolution to the vote now.

A vote was taken by show of hands.

In favour:

Bolivia (Plurinational State of), China, Côte d'Ivoire, Equatorial Guinea, Ethiopia, France, Kazakhstan, Kuwait, Netherlands, Peru, Poland, Russian Federation, Sweden, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): The draft resolution received 15 votes in favour. The draft resolution has been adopted unanimously as resolution 2444 (2018).

I now give the floor to those members of the Council who wish to make statements.

Ms. Pierce (United Kingdom): I welcome our colleagues from Djibouti, Eritrea and Somalia.

I should like to thank Council members for their unanimous support for resolution 2444 (2018). It lifts sanctions on Eritrea. It sets out the Council's continued support for efforts to improve peace and security in Somalia.

The agreement to lift sanctions on Eritrea recognizes the improvements in regional peace and security and the positive steps Eritrea has taken to meet the demands of the Security Council, and it is right that in the light of such developments we reconsider the measures. It is also right that we continue to urge dialogue between Eritrea and Djibouti on the Djiboutian combatants missing in action and on the resolution of their border dispute. We look forward to continued efforts to normalize relations between both countries and we stand ready to assist.

Turning to Somalia, we condemn in the strongest terms the horrific attacks in Mogadishu on Friday. It is clear that Al-Shabaab continues to pose a serious threat to the peace and stability of Somalia and the region. This resolution underlines our full support for the Somali authorities in their efforts to combat this threat. In this context, we welcome the progress made to date on security reform. Further progress is now essential to implementing the national security architecture and make full use of integrated regional Somali forces to deliver a successful transition to Somali-led security. Coordinated international engagement will remain key. We also look forward to further cooperation between the Somali authorities and the reconstituted Panel of Experts on the implementation of the arms embargo.

I think that the countries concerned and the region deserve to be congratulated on the important steps forward that they have taken, which have made this resolution possible today. Not only is it a very important step for the countries of the region, but I think it also sends a helpful wider signal to the international community that if the right steps are taken, sanctions can be lifted. The United Kingdom has the pleasure to continue to offer its full support to the Somali authorities, the Djiboutian and Eritrean authorities, the Committee pursuant to resolutions 751 (1992) and 1907 (2009) concerning Somalia and Eritrea, and the Panel of Experts in their efforts to support peace and stability.

Mr. Amde (Ethiopia): At the outset, I would like to welcome Ambassador Abukar Dahir Osman, Permanent Representative of Somalia, Ambassador Mohamed Siad Doualeh, Permanent Representative of Djibouti, and Mr. Amanuel Giorgio, Chargé d'affaires of Eritrea.

I welcome unreservedly the adoption of resolution 2444 (2018). We greatly appreciate the United Kingdom for its efforts as penholder in facilitating the negotiations on resolution 2444 (2018) and all Security Council members for voting in favour of the resolution. We fully support the resolution drafted by the United Kingdom, which we believe is balanced and the result of a consensus made in the negotiations over the last couple of days. We commend the role played by the Monitoring Group on Somalia and Eritrea and the Committee established pursuant to resolutions 751 (1992) and 1907 (2009) concerning Somalia and Eritrea, which has done great work in supporting peace and security in the Horn of Africa.

The whole trajectory of future development in our subregion has changed fundamentally in recent months. Countries of the region have opened a new chapter of normalizing relations, resulting in relations that truly reflect the long-standing historical ties among our peoples. This has already had enormous implications for the work of the Committee and the sanctions regime as a whole. It also has great significance for regional and international peace and stability.

We have adopted this resolution today at a time when a major historic development is unfolding in the Horn of Africa. The breakthrough arising from the rapprochement between Ethiopia and Eritrea is already producing unprecedented and far-reaching positive consequences and is significantly changing the political landscape of the Horn of Africa and beyond. It is highly appropriate for the Security Council to take this decisive decision at the time when countries of the region are turning a new page in their relations.

The Horn of Africa has tremendous potential for shared development and prosperity, provided that there is durable peace and stability. The Council decision today will help to capitalize on the opportunities we are now creating to transform the region into a zone of peace and prosperity and usher in a new era of friendship among all the countries of the region. It is with this conviction that, last July, my Prime Minister formally submitted a request to the United Nations to lift the sanctions imposed on Eritrea. Therefore, today, we are very pleased that the Council responded positively by lifting the sanctions on Eritrea.

For our part, we are fully committed to forging ever closer political, economic, social and security cooperation with all the peoples and Governments of the Horn of Africa. This will serve and advance the interests of our peoples and ensure regional peace, development and cooperation.

A lifting of the sanctions regime on Eritrea does not, of course, mean that the region is free of challenges. We still face problems that require effort and determination to resolve. We still need the help and serious support of the international community. But, for our part, we are determined to accelerate efforts being taken to create a region where peace, development and democracy prevail in harmony. We are confident that the international community will stand in solidarity to support us as we continue to move forward towards greater peace, stability and economic integration in the Horn of Africa.

It is also encouraging to note how far Somalia has come in recent years. At the same time, the rebuilding and reconstruction of the country still requires sustained engagement and support. Somalia has indeed reached an important phase in consolidating its State institutions, but Al-Shabaab remains the greatest challenge, as it is capable of creating destruction in Somalia and beyond.

The security situation remains volatile, and Al-Shabaab continues to present a serious danger to the peace and security of Somalia and the region as a whole. The string of deadly bomb attacks last Friday claimed the lives of over 50 innocent civilians and injured many more. It was a reflection of the continuous threat being posed by the group. It underlined the importance of doing everything possible to minimize Al-Shabaab's

acquisition of arms and funds, as well as the necessity to control its activities.

It is particularly important at this critical juncture not to divert attention from the current process as the Government prepares for the very important transition towards elections in 2020. The Council must continue to provide the fullest possible assistance to sustaining the Government and the transition. We must avoid the risk of seeing the gains achieved so far reversed; these are gains that were made with enormous sacrifices by the Somalis and others in the region.

Finally, Ethiopia will continue to be involved closely, constructively and in a principled manner, in all efforts aimed at settling outstanding issues in good faith.

Mr. Skoog (Sweden): We welcome the adoption of resolution 2444 (2018) this morning.

The historic the historic and significant developments in the Horn of Africa that we have witnessed over the past year, triggered by the Eritrean-Ethiopian reconciliation, have dramatically changed the dynamics in the region and open a new chapter of peace and cooperation. The basis for the restrictive measures against Eritrea adopted almost a decade ago is no longer in place, which is why we supported the resolution. It is imperative that the Security Council continues to support the courageous decisions taken by the leaders in the region, as these developments will have far-reaching and positive consequences for the greater Horn of Africa region and beyond. As the Secretary General said in his address to the General Assembly, despite the chaos and confusion in our world, there are also winds of hope blowing around the globe (see A/73/PV.6).

The developments in the Horn of Africa represent a unique opportunity that promises to bring not only stability to the region but also allows its countries and peoples to reap the benefits of the political, economic and social cooperation that will follow. It shows how regional cooperation can turn the page on war and conflict. There is still hard work ahead to secure the full potential of the peace dividends. We need to offer our full support in seizing the opportunities and addressing remaining concerns. In this regard, we welcome the Secretary-General's recent decision to expand the mandate of the Special Envoy to the Sudan and South Sudan to include the entire Horn of Africa. It will give the United Nations greater ability to support and facilitate further positive developments in terms of peace and security, human rights, stability and ultimately development, economic growth and welfare.

Turning to Somalia, the sanctions regime in place continues to play a critical role in supporting the international effort to defeat Al-Shabaab, through averting the flow of illicit arms and preventing the group from raising funds, while at the same time allowing the important build-up of the Somalia national forces, as Somalia is preparing to take greater charge of its own security. Our continued strong support to the State-building and peacebuilding processes in the Somali region will be crucial, and we must stay the course together with the Somali people in keeping up the momentum and build on what has already been achieved.

Mr. Umarov (Kazakhstan): First, we would like to thank the delegation of United Kingdom for drafting today's very important resolution (resolution 2444 (2018)). We also welcome the representatives of Somalia, Eritrea and Djibouti in the Chamber.

We would like to highlight that this year has been marked by unprecedented positive and very welcome developments in the Horn of Africa. In the last few months, we have witnessed the historic rapprochement among countries of the region, led by the great vision and determined political will of their leaders. Today we see the fruitful results of courageous choices made by the States of the region to close an era of long-protracted tensions, conflict and competition, and which have instead paved the way for a new era of peaceful and mutually-beneficial cooperation.

We join the international community in recognizing and commending the efforts of Ethiopia's new leadership to initiate and promote a constructive and forward-looking dynamism at the regional level, aimed at enabling the nations of the region to advance towards a long-awaited, peaceful and prosperous future. The countries of the Horn of Africa have demonstrated a resolute capacity and commitment to finding solutions to regional problems. While we commend the fast progress that has been made, we are mindful of the perils as well as the challenges and impediments that lie ahead in the work of creating durable peace and prosperity in the region.

It is important that the United Nations and its States Members and international organizations meaningfully support the momentous changes that are rapidly

unfolding. They unquestionably have far-reaching implications for the security and prosperity of the broader region, and we must ensure that these gains are consolidated. In that regard, we welcome the Secretary-General's decision to expand the mandate of the Special Envoy for the Sudan and South Sudan to cover the Horn of Africa as well. Closer collaboration between the United Nations, the African Union and the Intergovernmental Authority on Development will enable us to build on the recent strides that have been made towards peace and security and enhance subregional strategies to address security and development issues. Diplomacy, mediation, confidence-building and dialogue, together with development investments, are the sure ways to resolve the existing disputes between countries. We welcome the engagement between Djibouti and Eritrea and encourage them to engage in further efforts to resolve the remaining challenges in their bilateral relationship.

With regard to Somalia, we strongly condemn the 9 November terrorist attack in Mogadishu and express our deepest sympathy and condolences to the families of the victims and to the people and the Government of Somalia. That horrific act of violence reminds us of the fragility of Somalia's security situation and the importance of making every effort to preserve its hard-earned stability. Along with that, we are very pleased to be able to recognize the Federal Government's achievements in its efforts to rebuild its conflict-torn nation. We commend and support the comprehensive reform agenda and vision for development of Somalia's leadership. We would like to stress the importance of the sustained and coordinated support of the international community for the recovery and stabilization processes in Somalia, including by addressing the root causes of the crisis.

Kazakhstan has added its voice in support of today's adoption of resolution 2444 (2018), based on its own resolve and conviction with regard to peace and prosperity in Africa. As Chair of the Committee pursuant to resolutions 751 (1992) and 1907 (2009) concerning Somalia and Eritrea, Kazakhstan was privileged to be a part of the positive outcome of today's Council meeting, and particularly happy to contribute to the peaceful process in the Horn of Africa. We strongly believe that the recent progress in the Horn of Africa could serve as an example regarding conflicts in other parts of Africa and the rest of the world.

Mr. Nebenzia (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): At the outset, I would like to congratulate both the leadership and the people of Eritrea on the lifting of the Security Council's sanctions. We have long said that the international restrictions against Eritrea were irrelevant. Over all these years no convincing evidence has been produced for Asmara's support to destructive forces in the region, and in the wake of the changes that have occurred in the Horn of Africa, the classification of the dispute between Djibouti and Eritrea as a threat to international peace and security was also outdated. We hope that the Council's adoption today of resolution 2444 (2018) will be a significant milestone in the work of strengthening friendly and good-neighbourly relations in the region. It would not be an exaggeration to say that the Council is indebted to Ethiopia and its Prime Minister, Mr. Abiy Ahmed, whose brave and decisive actions did a great deal to ensure the outcome of today's vote.

Of course, the resolution will not deal with all of the region's chronic issues in one fell swoop, to coin a phrase. We hope in particular that it will be a stimulus for promoting the normalization of relations between Eritrea and Djibouti. At the same time, however, we believe that the work of settling all the issues outstanding between the two countries belongs to bilateral diplomacy. If necessary, the parties can use the good offices of mediators and other purpose-built international mechanisms. In that regard, we consider that the regular and, what is most surprising, the indefinite reporting imposed by a group of countries looks like an outrageously excessive demand.

We regret the fact that the authors of the resolution included provisions affirming sexual and gender-based violence as a separate criterion for the imposition of sanctions, despite the fact that such behaviour is covered under the existing listing criteria. I want to remind the Council once again that issues pertaining to sanctions are clearly regulated under Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations, which is about the presence of threats to international peace and security. Any broader interpretation of that position runs the risk of a loss of sanctions instruments' effectiveness and, what is worse, their relevance. With regard to other countries subject to sanctions we have explained many times the negative consequences of such moves for the Council's work. Let me emphasize once again that this issue is not part of our direct remit. If we want to discuss such issues, we have the Human Rights Council and the Commission on the Status of Women. We should respect the appropriate division of labour in that regard.

Mr. Cohen (United States of America): The United States welcomes Eritrea's rapprochement with its neighbours. We are encouraged by its stated commitment to re-engaging in an effort to establish enduring peace and regional cooperation and to opening the door to its reintegration. This is a historic moment and a great opportunity for the Horn of Africa. But there is much more to do, particularly in addressing the questions regarding the disposition of missing Djiboutian troops and the final status of the Djibouti-Eritrea border.

We believe that the recent engagement between the two countries strongly suggests that their political will and intent are strong enough to reach a solution with the support of the international community. We are satisfied with the Council's agreement on resolution 2444 (2018), which pays particular attention to the importance of ensuring that Eritrea and Djibouti follow through on their commitments to resolving these matters, and we continue to call on all parties to cooperate in order to reach a satisfactory outcome. The United States predicates its support for lifting the United Nations sanctions on Eritrea on the current lack of evidence connecting Eritrea to Al-Shabaab. We appreciate the efforts of the Committee pursuant to resolutions 751 (1992) and 1907 (2009) concerning Somalia and Eritrea, and of the Monitoring Group on Somalia and Eritrea, to carry out their mandates in that regard.

We strongly support the renewal of the Sanctions Committee's mandate to focus on Somalia. There is no doubt that Somalia has made significant progress over the past decade, due in large part to the support of its regional partners and the international community as a whole. However, Somali capacity, including regarding the implementation of the remaining arms restrictions and the ban on the trade of Somali charcoal, remains limited owing to the country's security conditions, corruption and uneven progress in governance. We are confident that the Panel of Experts on Somalia will remain diligent in faithfully fulfilling its mandate, especially as it relates to comprehensive investigations and reporting.

The United States will continue to support Somalia in its efforts to stabilize the country for its people, including by ensuring that the international community takes all appropriate measures to maintain the integrity of the sanctions regime.

Mr. Michon (France) (*spoke in French*): France takes note of the Council's unanimous adoption of resolution 2444 (2018). From the outset France has given unwavering support to the ongoing rapprochement process in the Horn of Africa. This is a historic development, creating unprecedented opportunities for stabilization and development in the region. France would therefore like to commend the courageous decision of Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed of Ethiopia, without whom these developments would not have been possible.

It is the Security Council's responsibility to support these developments in the Horn of Africa, including by lifting the sanctions on Eritrea. Nevertheless, we believe that the Security Council still has legitimate demands with regard to Eritrea. First and foremost, the Eritrean authorities must cooperate with the Council, given that the Panel of Experts on Somalia has not been able visit Eritrea since 2011. Above all, Eritrea must give concrete signs that it wants to work with Djibouti to settle the issues of the border dispute between the two countries and of the Djibouti prisoners of war, in accordance with the provisions of resolution 2385 (2017). Those two issues continue to be unresolved, as the resolution that we have adopted today acknowledges. In that context, while France welcomed the meeting in Jeddah in September between the Presidents of Djibouti and Eritrea, we now expect that meeting to lead to concrete progress on the ground and a commitment to moving forward together.

In that regard, we believe it is crucial to ensure that no country in the region is left on the sidelines during the evolving situation in the Horn of Africa. France therefore welcomes the fact that with this resolution, the Security Council commits to regular monitoring of developments in the relationship between Eritrea and Djibouti in order to support peace, stabilization and reconciliation in the Horn of Africa. We are of course ready to work in coordination with all of the stakeholders in the region to contribute to strengthening this regional dynamic.

With regard to Somalia, France is of the view that the sanctions regime remains crucial to combating illicit trafficking in arms and Somali charcoal, which fuels the terrorist group Al-Shabaab, still the main threat to Somalia's security. In that regard, I would like to express France's condolences to the Somali authorities and to the families of the victims of the terrible terrorist attacks on Mogadishu on Friday, 9 November. I would also like

to point out that the Somalia sanctions regime is aimed mainly at supporting the Somali Federal Government in their fight against terrorism. The exemptions from the arms embargo that the sanctions regime provides for enable them to acquire the equipment they need to combat terrorist groups, with the support of their international partners. It is therefore in the interests of the Somali Federal Government to pursue effective cooperation with the Panel of Experts on Somalia.

Ms. Wronecka (Poland): Poland welcomes the Council's adoption of resolution 2444 (2018), renewing the measures on Somalia for one year and lifting the sanctions regime on Eritrea. We would like to thank the United Kingdom for its constructive and efficient conduct of the negotiations on the document.

We acknowledge the importance of the sanctions regime in the case of Somalia, where the Federal Government is in the process of taking over full responsibility for the country's security and where Al-Shabaab continues to pose a serious threat to stability. We hope that the renewed measures will help to limit Al-Shabaab's access to arms and financing and strengthen the Government's State-building efforts.

To reiterate what we have stated on numerous occasions in recent months: Poland welcomes the developments in the Horn of Africa, especially the rapprochement between Ethiopia and Eritrea and the positive dynamic between Eritrea and Djibouti. We believe that sanctions are not a punishment but a policy tool, and that they should be subject to regular review and adjusted to the realities on the ground. In line with that approach, we have supported the lifting of the sanctions regime on Eritrea. We hope that recent encouraging events will enable durable peace to be achieved across the region. At the same time, we believe that the Security Council should closely follow the normalization between Eritrea and Djibouti and stand ready to support the two countries' efforts to peacefully resolve their differences.

Mr. Van Oosterom (Netherlands): I would first like to welcome our colleagues from Djibouti, Somalia and Eritrea to the Council.

The Kingdom of the Netherlands has a long-standing and strong commitment to peace and development in the Horn of Africa. That is why we voted in favour of resolution 2444 (2018) today. We see our decision as a tribute to the positive developments that have taken place in the region.

The peace agreement between Ethiopia and Eritrea represents a historic step. It paves the way for improved bilateral relations and stronger regional peace and stability. We welcome Eritrea's decision to start engaging with the international community and working to consolidate the peace agreement. Those are important steps, and we encourage Eritrea to build on that momentum to give impulse to domestic governance reforms, including reform of the economy, the national service, democratization and human rights. In particular, we call on Eritrea to cooperate better with international mechanisms, especially those related to human rights.

The positive developments in the Horn of Africa do not relieve the Council of its responsibility to monitor progress closely. In particular, we underline the need for concrete steps in the normalization of relations between Eritrea and Djibouti. That is why we welcome the Council's decision to remain seized of the matter by asking for regular reporting on this important issue. We also emphasize that the Council's other decisions and demands regarding Eritrea remain valid. That includes its decision, stated in resolution 2023 (2011), by which Eritrea must cease using illicit means to collect taxes outside Eritrea.

Finally, we welcome the renewal of the Somalia sanctions measures as essential support to the Somali Government in its efforts to deliver stability and security in Somalia. We especially welcome the addition of stand-alone sanctions criteria for sexual and gender-based violence. Those who commit such heinous acts should know that today the Council showed its commitment to responding to such practices.

In conclusion, as others have done, we condemn in the strongest terms the horrific terrorist attacks in Mogadishu last Friday.

Mr. Esono Mbengono (Equatorial Guinea) (*spoke in Spanish*): First of all, we would like to thank the United Kingdom for drafting resolution 2444 (2018). We also welcome the representatives of Djibouti, Eritrea and Somalia.

The delegation of the Republic of Equatorial Guinea voted in favour of resolution 2444 (2018) in view of the fresh dynamic that has emerged in the Horn of Africa, with the exception of the continued threats and potential atrocities from the terrorist organization Al-Shabaab, which the resolution also takes into account. My delegation has been closely following events in the Horn

of Africa since the current six-month period began. They mark the beginning of a new reality in the relations between countries in the region. Ethiopia and Eritrea have shown that reconciliation is possible, and that it produces many more benefits between neighbouring countries than confrontation does. They have reached significant agreements resolving a long-standing issue between their States, thereby defusing one of the most chronic and protracted conflicts in Africa.

Somalia and Eritrea have re-established diplomatic ties after a long period of rupture, which is a very significant step forward in their efforts to resolve their differences. The normalization of relations between Djibouti and Eritrea began when the Foreign Ministers of Ethiopia, Somalia and Eritrea travelled to Djibouti, a commitment that was subsequently confirmed in a meeting between the Presidents of Eritrea and Djibouti in Saudi Arabia in September. We realize that the region must be able to optimize its undeniable potential, and it is therefore important that the countries of the region unite their efforts to avoid their common threats, particularly Al-Shabaab. We ask that outstanding issues such as those pertaining to prisoners of war and border matters be tackled in the positive spirit of today's resolution, and here we are specifically referring to Eritrea and Djibouti.

In conclusion, peaceful, brotherly coexistence between States is a crucial factor that must prevail in the international political arena. It is vital to guaranteeing the peaceful coexistence in the region that all countries should foster with a view to ensuring their States' successful development. That is the new dynamic that the countries of the Horn of Africa have decided to embrace under the leadership of Ethiopia and its Prime Minister, Abiy Ahmed, and that is the spirit of the resolution we have just adopted.

Mr. Llorentty Soliz (Plurinational State of Bolivia) (*spoke in Spanish*): My delegation would like to express its gratitude for the work of the delegation of the United Kingdom in drafting of resolution 2444 (2018), which we just adopted unanimously. We also welcome the representatives of Djibouti, Eritrea and Somalia to this very important Security Council meeting.

Bolivia has been closely following the development of the events in the Horn of Africa. We reiterate our appreciation of the new approach of understanding and liaising undertaken by the countries of the subregion, which is beginning a renewed phase of peace and friendship that we are confident will promote cooperation in fundamental areas such as the economy, social and cultural affairs and, of course, security. In this regard, we believe that the progress made to date in the region must be reflected through commitments to confidence-building measures among States. We also believe that the important developments occurring in the Horn of Africa highlight the importance of leadership and the primacy of policy, as well as the need for dialogue and the support of the international community.

My delegation has reiterated on many occasions that sanctions are not an end in themselves. The Charter of the United Nations sanctions should be assessed in the light of the evolving situation and the context on the ground. This was a special case in which the necessity of lifting sanctions was, of course, imperative.

With regard to the situation in Somalia, my delegation also categorically condemns the recent terrorist attack that took place in Mogadishu. We express our concern about the risks that come with the continued presence of Al-Shabaab in Somalia and in the subregion, in addition to the threat posed by the presence of factions of Da'esh, the use of sophisticated techniques and asymmetric attacks. In that regard, we believe that the Council and the international community in general must continue to support an inclusive political process of peace and reconciliation that is guided and owned by the Somali people themselves.

Mr. Meza-Cuadra (Peru) (*spoke in Spanish*): We also wish to express our appreciation for the unanimous adoption of resolution 2444 (2018) lifting the sanctions against Eritrea, which bears witness to the positive progress being made towards establishing a dialogue between Eritrea and its neighbours and the general easing of tensions in the Horn of Africa region as a whole. However, we wish to underline that it is important to resolve such pending issues as those concerning the disappeared soldiers and the border between Djibouti and Eritrea. The role of Ethiopia in all of the positive developments in the region must be highlighted and acknowledged by the Council.

There are still major challenges that exist, such as Al-Shabaab's terrorism in Somalia and the need to make swift progress in the development of the region and in improving the living standards of its populations. Therefore, it was very important for the Council and the international community in general to recognize and adopt decisions that will encourage the

region to continue on the path towards achieving peace, reconciliation and development.

Mr. Alotaibi (Kuwait) (*spoke in Arabic*): First and foremost, I would like to express our sincere condolences to the Government and people of the brotherly nation of Somalia with respect to the victims of the terrorist attacks in Mogadishu last Friday.

The States in the Horn of Africa have seen significant positive political developments in recent times. That enabled the Governments and the peoples of the region to override their differences and to turn a page in the painful history of many generations. That has generated hope to achieving security and stability to which the region aspires. We commend the efforts made by the leaders of Ethiopia, Eritrea, Somalia and Djibouti which led to a historic achievement at the Horn of Africa summit with the signing of the Jeddah Agreement on Peace, Friendship and Comprehensive Cooperation.

We welcome today's adoption of resolution 2444 (2018) for which Kuwait voted in favour. That came out of Kuwait's established and firm position to achieve a just and lasting peace by peaceful means. We believe in taking the opportunity of the historic reconciliation in the Horn of Africa region in order to achieve the desired peace. We also hope to reach a consensual formula which leads to the best interests of the peoples in the region and takes into consideration the rights of the States that they belong to.

Based on that, Kuwait supported the decision of the Security Council to lift sanctions against Eritrea in order to let it play a fruitful role in establishing stability in the region along with its neighbours, and especially in resolving its pending differences with Djibouti. In that regard, we look forward to achieving tangible developments by 15 February 2019, the date of submitting the next report of the Secretary-General on this matter.

We should not forget also to lift the sanctions against Somalia, which is one of the main objectives of our joint efforts in order to help and support that country to confront the challenges it is facing. On top of those challenges is the serious threat posed by Al-Shabaab.

Sanctions are an important tool in the hands of the Security Council. Lifting the sanctions represents a message sent to the international community that they are not imposed for ever. They are not a tool to punish States and peoples. The message also is that the Council responds to positive developments and lifts the sanctions when the reasons for which they were imposed do not exist anymore. In such cases, there would be no justification for the Security Council which maintains international peace and security, pursuant to the Charter, to keep the sanctions imposed.

In conclusion, we would like to thank the delegation of the United Kingdom which is the penholder for its transparent work during the negotiations.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I shall now make a statement in my capacity as the representative of China.

First of all, China condemns the terrorist attack that occurred last Friday. We express our condolences and sympathy over the deaths and casualties resulting from the attack.

This morning, the Security Council unanimously adopted resolution 2444 (2018), lifting the sanctions on Eritrea and extending the mandate of the Panel of Experts of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 751 (1992). In the past few months, we have witnessed positive changes in the situation in the Horn of Africa and a continued improvement of relations among the countries of the region. The Council's lifting of sanctions on Eritrea is conducive to the efforts of the countries of the region to achieve peace and development and to maintain the current positive development momentum in the region, which China welcomes.

Meanwhile, the Horn of Africa still faces challenges. The Council and, indeed, the international community should continue to provide constructive assistance in the light of the needs of the countries in the region. We hope that the countries concerned in the region will actively take the current favourable opportunity to increase dialogue and consultations and meet each other halfway to properly solve the issues. I hope that the international community will continue to help the Somali Government focus on the threat of Al-Shabaab and make progress in Somalia's national reconciliation process. China is ready to continue to work with the international community in playing a constructive role in the attainment of peace, stability and development in the countries of the Horn of Africa.

I now resume my functions as President of the Council.

I give the floor to the representative of Somalia.

Mr. Osman (Somalia): At the outset, allow me to congratulate you, Mr. President, on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council this month. We are confident in your leadership and wish you every success in fulfilling your duties. I would also like to commend your predecessor, the Permanent Representative of the Plurinational State of Bolivia, for his excellent leadership in guiding the work of the Council last month.

We warmly congratulate the people of Eritrea for withstanding the hardship endured under the sanctions regime. We welcome the lifting of the sanctions on Eritrea, while acknowledging the efforts spearheaded by President Mohamed Abdullahi Mohamed Farmajo with regard to the normalization of the relationship between Eritrea and Djibouti. We hope that the two Governments will engage in good faith to settle all outstanding issues in accordance with international law.

Forty-six years ago, my country, Somalia, and its leaders were uncompromising in their hard work to achieve sustainable peace, particularly in Africa. My country successfully promoted and ensured the peace negotiations during the crisis between Tanzania and Uganda.

That having been said, the Federal Government of Somalia looks forward to the beginning of a new chapter of cooperation and partnership with all the countries in the Horn of Africa. Together we will strengthen the ties that have been forged among the peoples of the region. Since 1992, the Federal Government of Somalia has been publicly seeking the lifting of sanctions imposed on our country. Accordingly, I would like to raise the following points.

First, the outdated sanctions against Somalia constitute one of the longest-standing United Nations sanctions regimes ever imposed and one with the broadest mandate as well. Not only did the sanctions violate Somalia's national unity, but it also thwarted the Federal Government's policy goal of building a standing Somali national army. For example, sub-paragraph (a) of paragraph 11 and sub-paragraph (c) of paragraph 10 of the sanctions regime allow countries to provide weapons and ammunition to Somali regional authorities without the Federal Government being notified, thereby circumventing our approval of these weapons transfers and impeding the management of end users of such weapons and ammunition.

Despite our belief that sanctions are flawed in principle, they continued to be imposed on Somalia without proper assessment of their effectiveness for the attainment of the Council's desired end goal. We once again stress the importance of having clearly defined benchmarks to monitor the complete lifting of sanctions on Somalia. If no specific, clear and verifiable steps are set forth, the incentives to comply with Council's demands will be undercut and the effectiveness of the ending the sanctions regime will drastically diminish.

Secondly, terrorist groups like Al-Shabaab and the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant remain a serious threat to Somalia's peace and stability. A year ago, on 14 October 2017, we witnessed one of the largest and deadliest attack ever to take place in Somalia. Yet, sadly, the Somali people are receiving messages of condolences and sympathy anew from our friends and partners, following the deadly attack on Mogadishu on 9 November, which claimed the lives of more than 50 people and injured more than 100. We believe that Security Council sanctions should target such terrorist groups as Al-Shabaab, which continue to receive weapons and resources from abroad. In its report, the Monitoring Group on Somalia and Eritrea concluded that, with regard to the 14 October attack,

> "While there is no evidence to suggest that the ... improvised explosive device contained home-made explosives, constructing a 1,200 kg bomb by traditional harvesting of explosive remnants of war would entail a major logistical operation; for example, Al-Shabaab would have had to harvest approximately 6,000 60-mm mortars or 190 TM-57 anti-tank mines" (*S/2018/1002, para. 74*).

Terrorists groups like Al-Shabaab do not go through the official import channels. Consequently, our fight against terrorism is all the more challenging since large quantities of weapons and resources continue to flow into Somalia despite the embargo. Terrorist groups in Somalia have made use of the existing trade networks and the short distance to Somalia from across the Gulf of Aden. The impact on Somalia of the war in Yemen has been particularly acute, since we are incapable of securing remote areas along our coastline and borders. The flow of illegal weapons and resources into the country can only be curbed by targeting and destroying the networks that provide them. We ask our partners to help us improve our capacity in air surveillance, borders, customs, and law enforcement to control land

borders and other sea and air access points. It is the responsibility of the Federal Government of Somalia to monitor and safeguard its borders.

Thirdly, the construction of the military base in Berbera clearly defies Council resolutions, and serves to undermine Somalia's unity, sovereignty and territorial integrity. Two years in a row, the Monitoring Group on Somalia and Eritrea has noted that the establishment of the military base in Berbera is a clear violation of the arms embargo imposed on Somalia. However, the foreign base continues to be built, with a reported completion date of 2019, and military equipment continues to be transferred. We ask Council members what the purpose of a sanctions regime is if violations of that regime by Member States are ignored by the Security Council. We wonder what the value of Council resolutions is if Somalia's sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity are continually and openly violated. Over the last quarter century, the Council has issued a large number of statements on the issue, but that it is time now to back up those words with appropriate action pursuant to its primary responsibility under the Charter of the United Nations to maintain international peace and security.

Fourthly, subject-matter expertise and evidence-based reporting are the best practices to be used in the monitoring of a United Nations arms embargo. However, those practices seem not to be worthy of consideration today. Since the adoption of its mandate, the Monitoring Group, unlike most Panels of Experts on sanctions, which are present on the ground in the countries they monitor, has been based in Nairobi, Kenya, far from Somalia. As a result, the Group devotes only 20 per cent of its time to being present in Somalia to monitor, analyse and investigate events in the country. Although the number of experts makes the Somalia group one of the largest United Nations sanctions regimes, the quality of its reports has been mixed owing to the Group's minimal time spent on site, as well as to the questionable level of technical and regional expertise.

Furthermore, the Monitoring Group identifies those working for reform as the primary targets of the investigation. False accusations, claims based on weak evidence, gossip and political grievances have all been used to undermine Somali efforts. The Federal Government of Somalia will not tolerate Somali individuals, institutions and organizations being named in the report with little or no evidence to back up the reports' assertions. Many individuals and entities trying to invest in and rebuild Somalia have seen their reputations irresponsibly damaged or at least called into question before the international community based solely on rumour and speculation.

Accordingly, we welcome the name change of the Panel of Experts. We also recommend that the Panel be relocated to better perform its mandated tasks. Moreover, we recommend drawing experts from a pool of individuals with a higher level of technical and regional expertise than previously when the Panel undertakes future investigations in Somalia.

In conclusion, we thank the Security Council for its continued support of Somalia's unity and progress. Terrorism is not only a Somali fight; it is also a regional and a global fight, in which we are all united so as to be able to counter its ever-changing threat. We encourage the Council to look beyond the borders of Somalia and support us in our regional approach to the threats we are facing. That is the only way that we can comprehensively defeat terrorism and build a lasting peace in Somalia and throughout the world.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Djibouti.

Mr. Doualeh (Djibouti): At the outset, Djibouti wishes to express is profound gratitude to the members of the Security Council for the opportunity to offer its views on the unresolved border dispute with Eritrea and the remaining 13 prisoners of war still unaccounted for. It further wishes to thank Mr. Kairat Umarov, Chair of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 751 (1992) concerning Somalia, and lauds his efforts to continue with faith and perseverance in the execution of his mandate. We of course commend Ambassador Karen Pierce of the United Kingdom and her team for all the efforts they have made in the process leading to the drafting of resolution 2444 (2018) adopted today. Most importantly, Djibouti expresses its gratitude to the members of the Council for their unanimous support of its legitimate security concerns, aspirations and goals.

First, on Somalia, Djibouti is heartened by the progress made in the implementation of the political road map, the national security architecture and the transition plan, and supports the call for the acceleration of these efforts. Djibouti welcomes the adoption of resolution 2431 (2018), extending the mandate of the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) until May 2019. AMISOM's continued enabling role and

support is vital to the implementation of the transition plan and the strengthening of the capacities of the Somali security forces.

However, it notes with the utmost concern that Al-Shabaab remains a threat to peace and security in Somalia, as evidenced by the latest terrorist attack in Mogadishu, in which dozens of innocent men, women and children were killed or injured. Al-Shabaab routinely commits brazen terrorist attacks at home and abroad and carries out targeted political assassinations. It is therefore urgent to accelerate efforts to implement the national security architecture, and we should collectively mount, in earnest, a meaningful effort to weaken and defeat Al-Shabaab.

Djibouti remains committed to peace in Somalia and will continue to contribute in any way it can. In that regard, I wish to inform the members of the Security Council that the African Union Peace and Security Council, currently chaired by Djibouti, will be conducting a field visit in Somalia on 27 and 28 November. The Council will have an opportunity to gather information at first-hand and conduct an in-depth analysis of the security situation in the country. It will therefore be in a position to articulate practical action-oriented recommendations on the way forward.

On Eritrea, Djibouti welcomes the lifting of arms embargoes, travel bans, assets freezes and targeted sanctions on the country. As the Council is aware, Djibouti's paramount interest is to secure a peaceful, permanent resolution of all boundary and territorial differences, in accordance with international law. Those differences, which arose in 2008 and led to an armed conflict that year, have remained unresolved and constitute a threat to Djibouti itself and to international peace and security. Direct negotiations and mediation by third parties have been attempted, but have failed to make significant progress towards a settlement.

Djibouti has called upon the Council, with the assistance of the Secretary-General, to facilitate an agreement of the parties to voluntarily submit their boundary and territorial differences for full and final settlement by an impartial third party, such as an international arbitration tribunal or the International Court of Justice, in accordance with Article 33 of the Charter of the United Nations. What Djibouti seeks are impartial, forward-looking measures that assist the parties in settling their prolonged conflict by recommending a specific means of settlement from among those identified in Article 33 and establishing a mechanism leading to agreement on those means.

In that regard, Djibouti reiterates its gratitude to the members of the Council for the unanimous support for resolution 2444 (2018), just adopted. It underlines the importance of continuing efforts aimed at normalizing relations between Eritrea and Djibouti for regional peace, stability and reconciliation; the settlement of disputes in a peaceful manner, consistent with international law; and support for the good-faith resolution of these matters.

As noted in paragraph 3 of the resolution, the Presidents of Djibouti and Eritrea met in Jeddah on 17 September and agreed to continue efforts aimed at the normalization of relations between the two countries. Djibouti is committed to deepening dialogue and negotiating in good faith with Eritrea until an amicable resolution is achieved on all outstanding issues. Continued stalemate is not an option; we need to expedite the process. In that regard, we welcome paragraph 57 of the resolution, which underscores the importance of the Council's continued engagement, guidance and oversight. Djibouti is committed to working with Eritrea until the parties reach a full and final agreement on the international land boundary, the sovereignty of Doumeira Island, the maritime boundary and the status of the prisoners of war.

On the prisoners of war, 13 prisoners, who remain unaccounted for, are still in Eritrean custody. As we have stated before in the Chamber, the release of our remaining prisoners of war from the cruelty of their captivity has been uppermost in our thoughts. We will engage meaningfully with Eritrea to clarify the fate of the remaining prisoners of war and will work tirelessly to ensure their prompt repatriation. We express hope that, after nine years of stonewalling about them, Eritrea is at last willing to comply with Council decisions and will engage in good faith on the issue of the Djiboutian combatants missing in action, as called for in paragraph 6 of resolution 2444 (2018). The Government of Djibouti has authorized the High Commissioner for Refugees to review all of the individual histories of Eritrean prisoners of war held in Djibouti since the clashes of 2008 and to make recommendations with respect to their status and need for protection.

Finally, Djibouti welcomes the reporting mechanism, as provided for in paragraph 57. We are looking forward to the report of the Secretary-General

to be presented to the Council no later than 15 February 2019. Indeed, progress can be made, and it can be made swiftly, if there is commitment to the process by the disputing States.

(*spoke in French*)

In conclusion, allow me to reaffirm the readiness of Djibouti to contribute to strengthening good-neighbourly relations among the countries of the region. We must do all we can to ensure that the metaphor that we often use to describe the current dynamic in the region — the "wind of peace that blows in the Horn of Africa" — is not a mere cliché and an empty slogan or, at best, a catchphrase without any concrete, tangible basis in reality. Peace in the region must be total, inclusive and must generate a transformative force that, we hope, will enable the countries in the Horn of Africa to reach their economic potential for the sake of the peoples living there.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I now give the floor to the representative of Eritrea.

Mr. Giorgio (Eritrea): I wish to congratulate China on its assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for the month of November.

For the past nine years in its appeals before the Council, the delegation of Eritrea has sought an end to the unwarranted punitive measures imposed on the people of Eritrea. The long-overdue call for justice has finally been answered through the Council's unanimous decision to adopt resolution 2444 (2018).

The lifting of the sanctions will mark an end to a difficult period for Eritrea and the region. The actions and inactions of the Council have had harmful consequences for the people of Eritrea and the Horn of Africa, resulting in two decades of missed opportunities for peace and socioeconomic progress.

On this historic day, I humbly congratulate the people of Eritrea, who have endured persistent external pressure designed to taint their heroic history and thwart their vision for durable peace and economic progress in the Horn of Africa. Eritreans will not look backwards and are not resentful. While mindful of the historical lessons of the past two decades, they are determined to create a peaceful and prosperous nation that is worthy of the sacrifice made for over seven decades to build a harmonious, peaceful and confident country.

Eritreans are extremely pleased to have witnessed the recent positive regional developments. Eritrea as a nation is committed to working with all its neighbours, including Djibouti, to consolidate the gains made since the historic rapprochement between Eritrea and Ethiopia, the Agreement on Peace, Friendship and Comprehensive Cooperation between Ethiopia and Eritrea, and the tripartite agreement of cooperation between Somalia, Eritrea and Ethiopia, which mark the beginning of a new dawn. Eritrea would like to take this opportunity to thank Ethiopia and Somalia, which have called for the immediate lifting of the sanctions, for their courageous position.

While proud of the region's capability to resolve intransigent conflicts at an unprecedented speed, we are not complacent. Eritrea recognizes that a more difficult and complex task lies ahead. The country is determined to redouble its efforts and work closely with its neighbours to build a region at peace with itself that fulfils the desires and aspirations of every woman, man and child for a dignified life.

Eritrea welcomes the good wishes and the encouragement of the international community and applauds its willingness to show support for this new era. However, more than good intentions, the region needs an understanding approach on the part of the international community and the freedom to chart its own policies and future based on the shared history, culture and interests of the people of the region.

In conclusion, I thank all those who have advocated and supported the lifting of the sanctions against the people of Eritrea. I would also like to thank Kazakhstan, as Chair, and the United Kingdom, as penholder, for the constructive engagement they have had with my delegation.

The meeting rose at 11.10 a.m.